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Wagner's "Meistersinger."

[European journals are full of glowing or condemnatory opinions of the new opera. Probably no one has written more intelligently and more sensibly about it than Dr. HANSLICK, the very able critic of the *Neue freie Presse* of Vienna, of whose report the London *Orchestra* gives us the following abstract].

The long-expected opera of Wagner, which for a considerable period has furnished numerous rumors and inexhaustible table talk in all the capitals of Europe, saw light on the 21st ult. at Munich. It was produced before a large though not crowded audience, and lasted from six in the evening until eleven. As may be anticipated, the event was heralded and accompanied by some of those glowing panegyrics with which admirers of Wagner hail even his least movement: how much more than the genesis of a new opera. One of his most devoted satellites, Peter Cornelius, wrote before the first night, "The production of the '*Meistersinger*' will be an artistic event such as till now has never been experienced by any public in the world,"—a prophecy to be received with the appropriate grains of salt. In sober truth the "*Meistersinger*" seems a long-spun, uninteresting, flat sort of work, insufferable as to libretto, inconceivable as to music, gorgeous as to scenery. Dr. Edward Hanslick, late Austrian musical commissioner at the Paris Exhibition, has published a long and ably-written analysis of the opera, the opinions in which, if expressed with that rotundity peculiar to German literature, are evidently sound and written with authority. Let us pick a few phrases from this lengthy work of his, by way of laying his view before our readers. His opinion is all the more valuable in that, writing from the land of Wagner-worship and surrounded by panegyrists of that composer, he votes in a terrible minority, but with as much fearlessness as though the whole world of Germany and of the Future school applauded his view.

To commence *ab initio*. The overture to the "*Meistersinger*," which dashes all the leading motifs of the opera, one after another, broken-wise into a flood of chromatic passages and transitions, in order finally to shake them together in a veritable hurricane of sound, must awaken the apprehension, in the uninitiate at least, that the Nürnberg Mastersinger's business was chiefly done in prussic acid. On the curtain rising, we behold the inside of the St. Katherine's Church, in Nürnberg. The municipality sing a chorale, between the verses of which the orchestra depicts the tender passions of a young knight, who, buried in the contemplation of a young city maiden, stands in the foreground. As soon as service is over the young knight, *Walther von Stölzing*, hurries to the lovely unknown: "Say, Miss, are you already affianced?" ("Mein Fräulein, sagt, seydt Ihr schon Braut?") With the sudden reciprocity and energy which characterize all Richard Wagner's love affairs, *Eva Pogner* replies, "I choose you, or nobody!" Only the suitor must first fulfil the condition ordained by her father to win the prize in master-singing. *Eva* hurries thence with her aged crony, *Magdalen*; *Walther* remains in the church, where preparations are just being made for a meeting of the Master-singers. With horrible profundity *David* then instructs him respecting the arrangements of the song tribunal, and the poetical rules, &c., thereof. He reckons over to him forty or fifty different "tones and manners," as "the English tin manner," the cinnamon-pipe manner, the frog, the calf, the Stieglitz, the altered, much-devouring manners—it sounds like a moving of carriage-harness set to music. At last the masters arrive, converse for ever so long, and are subsequently summoned by their names. The sitting commences with a speech of *Pogner*, the goldsmith, in which he

promises the hand of his daughter *Eva*, together with his valuable property, to him who "shall achieve the prize for artistic singing before the whole people on St. John's Day, be he who he may." After wearisome delay the hero *Walther* demands to be allowed to sing. The town-clerk, *Beckmesser*, an ill-conditioned old cur, exercises the functions of "marker;" that is, hidden behind a screen, he marks down in chalk all the errors which the singers have committed in contravention of the *Meistersingers'* school-rules. Before he commences, however, all the paragraphs of the society's statutes are read over to the *Knight* for information, with which the audience, already gorged to sickness with all the previous explanations of the *Meistersingers'* rules, could joyfully dispense. *Walther* sings a spring love-song, which, despite more than one spiritual and graceful figure, produces no true and perfect effect, chiefly by reason of the unmeasured fidgetiness of the accompaniment and its modulations. *Walther* has been singing for a good while, but has not thoroughly sung himself out, when *Beckmesser*, well-chalked slate in hand, springs out of the marker's box, and manifests no end (*eine Unzahl*) of faults. The rest of the masters are also disgusted with the heterodoxy of the song, which they pronounce to be "vain ear-tickling." Only *Hans Sachs* takes *Walther's* part, and thereby awakens the furious wrath of *Beckmesser*, who foresees a dangerous rival in the *Knight*. A raving, chaotic inside-out of all the voices follows, which at last comes to an end with the verdict that the *Knight* has "sung badly and sinned." So ends the act.

Here then we have the elements of a comic opera—approaching in fact extravaganzas: a school for which Wagner is in no respect suited. An elephant can more easily caracole than Wagner be funny. When he seeks, in the parts of *David* and *Beckmesser*, to make his music funny, he only succeeds in making it sprawl and limp—hideous even to unbearableness. The putting out of *Gloster's* eyes in "*King Lear*," or the stifling of *Desdemona*, might appropriately be accompanied by the ghastly discords to which *Beckmesser* grumbles or laments. When the apprentice *David* speaks of "vain bread and water," the orchestra plays murder and arson! The chorus at the end of the act, in which the people laugh at *Beckmesser's* bad song, might be sung by an infuriated populace after a lynching. This incapacity of the composer is even more manifest in the second act, which opens with the singing and jumping about of the apprentices, who rejoice because of St. John's day, and, according to custom, worry their colleague, *David*. *Pogner* and *Eva* come along the road, and sing a sadly uninteresting quantity of small talk. *Eva* goes over to *Sachs*, in order to find out how the *Knight* got on at the singing-meeting; *Sachs* reports the unfavorable result of the trial. It is difficult to convey an idea of the ponderousness characterizing this endlessly trailing dialogue. Any "old master" would have helped himself along in this juncture by adopting the simple method of letting the two persons, for once in a way, sing together, or at least close their conversation with a duet. But under Richard Wagner people must only sing one after another, and never together, because that would be unnatural, and, above all, would sound agreeably. *Knight Walther* joins *Eva*. In the teeth of the conjunctive lines, "Yes, it is you! No, it is thou!" &c., &c., they do not even here come to a duet-phrase—each one sings to the other independently his or her thoughts, which (musically speaking extremely ugly and constrained) eventually culminate in a plan of flight. The loving pair are ready, but must, before all else, squeeze themselves into a corner out

of the way of the passing watchman, and, moreover, of *Herr Beckmesser*. *Beckmesser* begins to thrum on the lute, as a prelude to singing a stave under *Eva's* window, upon which *Hans Sachs* comes across to him with a cobbler's ditty ("Jerum, Jerum, Hollah, hollah heh!") which, intended to be comic, reminds one more vividly of a roaring tiger than of a cheerful shoemaker. No less than three verses of this fearsome song does *Hans Sachs* produce for the general benefit; then follows a negotiation between him and *Beckmesser*, who earnestly desires peace and quiet for his vocal production. *Sachs* at last promises him to be silent, but reserves to himself the privilege of branding every one of *Beckmesser's* mistakes by a blow of his hammer on the sole of the boot he happens just then to be repairing. It is incomprehensible how this joke is squeezed out to the very last drop, and thereby eventually rendered utterly tasteless. *Beckmesser* begins his serenade, which, commencing most happily and characteristically, breaks down only too soon; *Sachs* gives one or two knocks with his hammer in every bar, *Beckmesser* appeals to him in anger, *Sachs* pacifies him, *Beckmesser* begins again to sing, *Sachs* to knock; they quarrel again and again, and finally so noisily that the neighbors stick their heads out of the window and complain of the row. The apprentice *David* catches hold of *Beckmesser* and belabors him; his outcries attract a streetful of people, who all begin to swear, scream, and pitch into one another, making such an ensemble as you may realize from the "rally" of a scene in an English harlequinade. But this rumpus does not end the act: it dwindles down, until the noise of the rioters has died away, and the solitary watchman is left pacing along the deserted moonlit street. A pretty effect, but not new; Gounod has done it and to better purpose.

The dull joke of musical squabbling is carried through the third and best act of the opera. Here we have the narration of a dream of *Walther's*, "*Morgenlich leuchtend*," beginning with a tender melody which, fortunately, is not plunged at the third bar into the "hurricane of infiniteness," and, moreover, is blessed with a tranquil, simple accompaniment. This melody makes a favorable impression, of which the composer is only too well aware, for ever after he cannot keep clear of it. The many verses and subsequent repetition of the song do it undoubted damage. The act is also noticeable for a pleasant sounding, well-finished vocal quintet, the first part of which is at first intoned by *Eva* alone. From six o'clock to half-past ten the public had heard nothing but declamatory monologue, cropping up through "infinite melody" or boisterous choral tumult. Now appears, quite unexpectedly, the melodious quintet, in which, moreover, *Fräulein Mallinger* attained her first opportunity of taking stand as a vocalist, and the public bursts into rejoicing over the short concerted piece, which, in any other opera, would perhaps have attracted no extraordinary attention. This is one of the secrets of our modern Mastersinger. The scene changes to an open meadow before the gates of Nürnberg. It is St. John's Day; the several guilds march along in festive garments, music playing and banners displayed; the cobblers, the tailors, the bakers sing their trade-songs, the poetical and musical sturdiness of which is highly gratifying. A little waltz, of the simplest melody but exquisite instrumentation, enlivens the scene. A flourish of trumpets on the stage announces the approach of the Mastersinger Guild, and the competition takes place. *Beckmesser* is the first singer who has to contend for the prize; he commences pranking himself out with *Walther's* plumes; for he has stolen the "Dream Song" of that worthy, and attempts to

pass it off as his own. But, confused and timid, he forgets the text, and twists every measure into nonsense, so that he is obliged to retire amidst mocking and laughter. *Hans Sachs* declares that the poem was originally admired, and only fell through so disgracefully on account of its shocking mutilation. Upon his invitation, *Walther* himself now sings the song, which is received with acclamation. We do not rightly understand how it is that the same mastersingers, who only the day before scoffed at an absolutely similar song of *Walther's* as "vain ear-tickling," can suddenly become so deeply affected by his poetry as to decree him the prize and *Eva's* hand. Perhaps Richard Wagner will explain this to us another time; for to-day, suffice it that we are delighted to see the loving pair united, and that the opera has come to an end with a picturesque group.

So far the libretto and the way in which it is illustrated.

We now proceed to dig into the critical treatise in question for an idea as to the method by which the great composer of the Future has proceeded to work out those tenets which he holds. Wagner, Dr. Hanslick assures us, has remained in his "*Meistersinger*" steadfastly true to his musical principles as they govern "*Lohengrin*," and consistently pervade *Tristan and Isolde*. It always leaves a respectable impression when an artist holds earnestly, and with unswerving conviction, to the principles which he, once for all, pronounces to be the right and only true ones. This consistency—never infringed by reason of any temptation whatsoever—imparts to the "*Meistersinger*" the imposing characteristics of certainty and firmness. Wagner knows thoroughly what he means to do, a foreknown resolve speaks from every note of the score; no accident finds a place therein, but neither does one of those beautiful casualties which confer the finishing charm upon creations of artistic fancy, as they do upon those of Nature herself. We must honor the steadfastness with which Wagner sticks to his peculiar principle; but to that principle the "*Meistersinger*" has not induced us to adhere. It is the recognized resolving of every convenient form into a shapeless, sensually intoxicating tinkle—the substitution of vague, incongruous melodizing for independent, shapely limbed melodies. One may confidently employ Wagner's slantindicular term of "infinite melody" as a technical expression for this kind of thing, as now-a-days everybody knows what he has to expect under that name. "Infinite melody" is the ruling power, musically wallowing about the "*Meistersinger*," as well as "*Tristan and Isolde*." A small *motivo* is struck up; before it has had time to grow into a proper melody or theme it is bent, broken, set higher or lower by means of continual modulation and inharmonious shoving about, then carried on a little bit, then chopped up to pieces and cut short again, repeated or imitated now by this, now by that instrument. Anxiously shunning every resolving cadence, this toneless and muscleless figure flows forth into the immeasurable, ever renewing itself out of itself. To cast a glance over entire lengthy scores of this sort, is to perceive always the same uniformity of impression, joined to continual nervous restlessness and interruption of the details. Only in a very few places where the text exacts a lyrical resting-spot, a something in the shape of a song (as in *Walther's* airs and the cobbler's ditty) does the *motivo* concentrate itself for the time being into a substantial actual melody; on the other hand, throughout the dramatic parts of the opera—in the monologues, dialogues, and concerted pieces—the melody is not entrusted to the voices, but transferred to the orchestra, where, being "infinite," it is wound out as though it were passing through a spinning-jenny. This melody-weaving orchestral accompaniment constitutes in reality the coherent and substantial sound-picture of the "*Meistersinger*," the voice being compelled to accommodate itself to this accompaniment by also weaving its phrases into it, half declaimed, half sung.

It can be plainly seen that this method of composition is diametrically opposed to that hitherto employed by every master. Heretofore, the

melody for the voice was the first thing conceived by the sound-poet—the positive thing, to which the accompaniment (however free or complex in movement) was made subordinate. As a rule, one could divine the accompaniment, or an accompaniment, to the given melody for the voice, and the accompaniment thus, in some sort, became one's own unsubstantial property. In the "*Meistersinger*," the voice-part in itself is not only something merely incomplete, but is, in fact, *nothing at all*—the accompaniment is everything, is an independent *sinfonial* creation, is an orchestral fantasia with *ad libitum* voice accompaniments. If you were to place in the hands of an accomplished musician—one initiate in the mysteries of Wagnerian music—nothing but the libretto and the orchestral accompaniment, he would insert suitable voice-parts in the empty lines, much as a sculptor would fit the missing hand to an exhumed statue. But nobody could succeed in adapting (were it lost) the orchestral accompaniments to the parts of *Hans Sachs* or of *Eva*, any more than the sculptor could reconstruct the whole statue from the severed hand. The natural relations are turned upside down; for the orchestra beneath is the singer, the expresser of the leading thought, whilst the singers on the stage are only filling-up instruments. In order to obtain for this method (which is by no means one sharply characterizing and specifying, but, on the contrary, one peculiarly levelling and vulgarizing) a means of establishing the characteristics of the *dramatis personae*, and to preserve for the ear an anchor of salvation in the ocean of "melodic infinity," Wagner uses the so-called "memory-contrivance;" that is, themes which crop up in the orchestra as soon as a certain person comes on the stage, or a certain event is referred to. The Master-Singer's Guild has its own march-like *motivo*, the apprentice David his own writhing phrase of semiquavers; similarly *Walther* and *Sachs* have each his own theme, as well as musical uniform, by which people can be recognized in a crowd or by twilight. Not only personal rights, but rights of things, are to Wagner fitting foundations for these "memory-contrivances." As soon as any mention is made in any part of the opera, of St. John's Day or of the prize-singing, so soon is struck up *Pogner's* address from the first act; *Walther's motivo* not only accompanies his person, but every allusion to him, to *Eva's* love, to genuine poetry in contradistinction to guild poetry, &c., &c. Inasmuch as that to which these *motivi* refer constitutes pretty nearly the whole material of the "*Meistersinger*," and, besides, the *motivi* themselves are the happiest musical phrases in the whole opera—you are destined to hear them throughout the whole evening, alone or together, now in this, now in that orchestral part, colored brightly or darkly as the case may be. At first the listener rejoices over these tiny melodies; moreover, his intelligence is kept busy in recognizing and following them up; but the more incessantly they swing us backwards and forwards, the more uncomfortable we become, just as in a real swing. The whole music of the opera is made up of four or five such leading *motivi*. Rightly and sparingly employed, musical reminders of this sort produce an admirable effect, of which Weber has given us an immortal example in the *motivo* of *Zamir*; but one cannot build up an æsthetic principle out of a lucky hit. It would really seem as if these faithful scraps of melody, which have brilliantly rescued Wagner from many a difficulty, had, in the "*Meistersinger*," grown over his head, almost against his will. From being his pet it has become his bane.

The production in Munich was a quasi-success. The slim young King, with the dreamy look, lurked apparently alone in his state-box from beginning to end of the opera. When, however, at the end of the second act, Richard Wagner was loudly called for, as well as the singers, he (Wagner) stepped forward from the back of the Royal box, and bowed from its front to the public. This highly affected greeting, which was exactly repeated after the third act, somewhat astounded the strangers present, some of whom expected that the next thing would be that the

King would be called for! As a theatrical representation, the "*Meistersinger*" is a spectacle musically excellent, scenically incomparable. Pictures of dazzling color-glorious and novelty, groups full of life and character, discover themselves to the eyes of the spectator, who has scarce time to reflect how much or how little of the effect produced upon him is to be ascribed purely to the musical creation.

The Voice in Singing.

(From the Atlantic Monthly).

The Voice in Singing. Translated from the German of EMMA SEILER, by a Member of the American Philosophical Society. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co.

This is a book which all persons interested in vocal culture, either for themselves or others, should welcome. The tribute paid to Madam Seiler by two such eminent men of science as Helmholtz and Du Bois Reymond is in itself a guaranty of the scientific value of her work, and we trust will secure her a wide hearing and a willing discipleship for truths which, taken simply on their own merits, might in too many cases be doubted or undervalued. That the art of singing is now in a state of decline, if not altogether decayed, all competent critics admit. To believe this, it is only necessary to compare, as Madam Seiler does in her first chapter, the achievements of the great artists of a century ago with the possibilities of our petted favorites of to-day. But a still more striking proof of the fact that modern singing-teachers do not know how to teach singing, appears in the "lost voices" that we hear bemoaned on every side, both by professionals and amateurs. Madam Seiler herself was a victim to one of the most eminent of these vocal quacks; and, her voice having been entirely ruined while under his instruction, she resolved to try and rediscover the secrets of the old masters of the art, and, if possible, to establish scientifically what they had only practised empirically. An investigation of the larynx in the act of singing had already been begun by Manuel Garcia, the most celebrated master now living, who studied the interior of the throat by the aid of the laryngoscope. He was able to assert by seeing what a trained and critical ear might infer from hearing,—that the vocal organ is not a fixed tube which acts in the same manner throughout its whole compass, but that at several points in the scale its adjustments suddenly shift, and the next series of tones is produced in a different manner, and possesses a different quality, from any of those preceding. Evidently, then, every tone has its own adjustment, or "register," as it is called in singing, in which it can best and easiest be sung, and in which only it ought to be exercised and developed; and though the adjustment belonging to a lower set of tones may, by overstraining, be applied to a higher, yet this violation of the intention of nature is productive only of evil. The tones so forced are of hard and impure quality, flexibility is impaired, sweetness, compass, and expression are lost, and the voice itself is at length spoiled or broken up. All this vocal ruin and destruction are now going on under the complete ignorance or indifference of the modern singing-teacher to this great fundamental fact of the natural separation of the registers. Garcia's experiments, though they attracted great attention from scientific men, and inaugurated a new era in vocal culture, received little notice from his own profession. In this country he has one close follower, Carlo Bassini of New York, an Italian, whose *Methods for the Soprano, Baritone, and Young Voice* respectively are among the best we have, and may be well taken up with the schools of Panzeron, Concone and Zollner. But neither Garcia nor Bassini has thus far attempted more than an elementary theory of the registers of the voice; and it remained for Madam Seiler, by experiments with the laryngoscope, much longer continued and more successfully performed, to fix more accurately, and it seems to us finally, the limits and characters of the different registers of the voice. Instead of two or three, she makes five different actions of the vocal organ. Her theory of the head register in particular is entirely original, and that of the upper falsetto register is a greater satisfaction to us than almost any part of the book, as experience had convinced us that the falsetto in the woman's voice did not end and the head tones begin where Garcia and Bassini had supposed.

The subject of the registers occupies the whole of the second chapter of the book. The third treats of the "Formation of Sound by the Vocal Organ;" showing, first, what are the properties of tone, as established by scientific investigation. Madam Seiler derives from this what constitutes a good singing one, and what should be the disposition of the

breath and the choice of vowels and syllables in vocalization in order to obtain it. Flexibility, purity, pronunciation, any many other topics, are also discussed. All of this chapter is valuable, and much of it is new, since few have any idea how opposed to modern custom in all these particulars was the long and careful and gradual drill of the old masters of song. The fourth chapter is devoted to the æsthetic view of the art of singing, and is as thoughtful, judicious, and penetrating as the others. Some of the strong and novel points of the book may be summed up as follows:—

1st. The voice has five independent modes of action for singing, as the hand has five fingers for playing; and each is to be cultivated by and for itself, until the tones produced by each mode equal, or nearly equal, in strength and fullness, the pure tones of all the other modes. 2d. The man's voice is best trained by a man, and the woman's by a woman; and no voice is to be intrusted to any but a thorough singing-teacher. A mere instrumentalist or "natural singer" is not competent to teach this art. 3d. That, instead of beginning practice with inflated chest and a loud tone, at first and for a long time no more breath than is used in speech should be employed; and the tone should be soft, quiet, and entirely without effort. 4th. That the intelligent training of the voice may be, and best is, begun at five or ten years of age, as the growing organ is more susceptible of culture than the adult, and also because it takes years, instead of months, to make a singer. 5th. That singers should not be trained with a tempered instrument like the piano. 6th. That indiscriminate chorus-singing spoils the voice and the ear; and that singing should not, therefore, be taught in our public schools by persons who know of music nothing except the simple reading at sight, and of singing *nothing at all*; but that there should be vocal schools, where children could be trained to read music and to sing without danger of injuring their voices before they have fairly possessed them. No one who has not taught our public-school children to sing knows anything about the beautiful voices and sensitive musical organizations which abound among our little Americans. As the translator of the work says that Madam Seiler is now in this country, would that the educational powers thereof could give her at once a hundred young girls to be trained as teachers for the benefit of just such vocal schools here as she herself would like to see in Germany!

The Development of the Concert System. Concert Rooms and "Salons." Aristocracy, Plutocracy, Lovers of Art, and Mæcenates.*

To mark the boundary line between the artist and the virtuoso is now a far more difficult task than it formerly was, and the great number of æsthetic works and feuilletons have rather confused than enlightened our notions upon the subject. We frequently meet with a statement to the effect that this or that pianist, this or that fiddler, besides indulging in showy pieces peculiar to a virtuoso, performed some things in a perfectly artistic manner—while, on the other hand, critics often charge one whom they acknowledge to be a real artist, of having endeavored in this or that piece, to display his virtuosity in the most brilliant light. Until about thirty years ago, no one was recognized as an artist, who had not distinguished himself by his productive powers, and reached the art of realization through that of creation; the singer and the actor, however, were relieved from this obligation, for the former was not supposed to be a composer or the latter a poet; but among instrumentalists there was not a single exception; even Herz, Kalkbrenner, Beriot, the most shallow forerunners of the period preceding that of the *great* virtuosi, partly established their reputation as composers, though certainly in the lowest acceptance of the word.

Concerning the historical development of the concert system, up to the commencement of the present century, the facts to be found in works on music are unfortunately exceedingly rare; we are here struck by the phenomenon, which occurs only too frequently, that from the books of those learned in musical matters, especially of the *Culturhistoriker*, as they are called, we may glean information about anything more easily than about the connection between social life and artistic life in Germany, or of their influence upon

on each other; there are works of the last century treating of the importance of music, which mention the names of those citharists, who, as far back as five hundred years before the birth of Christ, played bravura runs and passages upon their instrument, and may be regarded as the founders of the virtuoso school in their own day; preserved in German books are also the names of the musicians whom Alexander the Great ordered to follow him as his private band to be present at his marriage with Roxana in Samarcand; we are acquainted with the details connected with the musicians of the Emperor Nero, who travelled as a virtuoso through his dominions, taking with him a host of "claqueurs," whose name of "Romans" has descended to the claqueurs of the Parisian theatres in our own time; but it is only with extreme difficulty that we are able to gather from political papers a few authentic facts concerning the development of public musical life in Germany.

Strange to say, the greatest number of facts relating to the musical life of the last century are to be obtained from the English, who are regarded as a non-musical people. There were perfectly organized concerts towards the end of the 17th century in London. The *London Gazette* of 1672 contains advertisements of concerts given by Barister, chapelmaster of King Charles II., aided by the King's twenty-four violinists. A still more interesting series of concerts was that of John Britton,† in the year 1678. This man was a coal dealer, who used to hawk his wares about the street, buying up, also, music, books and instruments. Of an evening he practised music, playing on the gamba—a sort of small violoncello with seven strings—and studying thorough-bass. At last, he hit upon the notion of appearing as a concert-giver. He collected all the musicians of any importance living in London, and built a concert room over the place where he stored his coals;‡ it was small and low, but speedily frequented by the best society. John Britton's concerts were in those days what Chappell's Monday Popular Concerts are now; if a musician wished to become known, he made his appearance at them; even Handel himself did not disdain to extemporize upon the small organ in Britton's concert-room. The infant prodigies, also, whom we are inclined to regard as forced hot-house plants of our own time, are first met with in the London Concerts of the eighteenth century. There was Dubourg, a fiddler of ten, and Cervetto, a cello player of eleven, who appeared, in 1760, at the concert of little Schmehling, afterwards so celebrated as a singer under the name of Mme. Mara. In 1764, there was even a cellist, John Crossdill, only nine years old. Besides those already named, there was a whole host of other little musical geniuses, only one of whom however fulfilled, when he grew up, the expectations formed of him: this was Mozart, who played at concerts in London as a boy of eight, and also wrote there his first Symphonies. Indeed, at that time, in England, still called "merry England," music found its way everywhere, besides being cultivated and cherished with sincerity and love, and not like a mere fashion, as at present. For two hundred years St. Cecilia's Day had been generally kept. There was a whole host of musical amateur societies—music was heard in almost every house, and sometimes under the strangest circumstances. Most interesting is the account in the *London Advertiser* of April, 1746, from which we learn that Christopher Gluck; composer of *Iphigenia*, *Armidæ*, *Alceste*, and *Orpheus*, appeared in London first as a concert-player, and a concert-player upon the water-harmonica, an instrument consisting of drinking-glasses, which were tuned by the amount of water put in them, and on which the performer played by passing his fingers round the edges. The instrument was then so popular that even the great Franklin, the champion of the free states of America, and the discoverer of the lightning conductor, wishing particularly to oblige a friend whose daughters were virtuose upon the

instrument in question, was not above improving this glass-harmonium, as he called it. Among the amateur associations of the time, there was a very prominent one, composed of the leading members of the aristocracy and gentry. This society cultivated the joyous strains native to old England, and offered every year a prize for the best compositions of the class. One of the composers who gained the largest number of prizes, and whose convivial songs are still to be heard at merry meetings, was the Earl of Abingdon, the peaceable father of a great warrior, the Duke of Wellington. It was at that time, namely 1767, and in London, that the large concert-grands were first made by Broadwood, the founder of the celebrated firm, still carried on by his direct descendants; the house of Erard dates only from sometime after 1780.

Our information respecting concerts in France, or rather in Paris, during the 17th and the 18th century is more scanty than that respecting those in London. Musical art was far less general in France than in England, and all the interest evinced for it was concentrated on the Opera. This sprang into existence as far back as 1647. Mazarin had sent for an Italian company, whose performances in the theatre "des petits bouffons" were very popular, and Queen Anne of Austria, the mother of Louis XIV., expressed her surprise that Frenchmen could not do something similar. This induced the superintendent of her household, the Baron de Noverre, to prevail on a certain Abbé Perrin and an organist of the name of Cambou to enter into competition with the Italians. They wrote a piece entitled *La Pastorale*, "première comédie française en musique," earning with it both honor and money. Perrin, moreover, obtained in the year 1699 the title of director of the Royal Academy of Music. The Grand Opera in Paris dates from this time. Up to 1830, it always remained under the immediate management of the Government. Even in the year of horror, 1792, a Government committee, consisting of the most furious Sansculottes and tenderest lovers of music, were at the head of it. Herbert, Danton, Henrion, and Fouquier, frequented it nearly every day. There is an amusing anecdote to be found in the annals of the period. On one occasion, Lainez, then the most popular singer, had sung a patriotic ode. When he had concluded, a man, whom he had often remarked as a very attentive listener behind the scenes, stepped up, and tapping him on the shoulder said: "Citizen, you have sung very beautifully, and I am quite touched. But your text is nonsense. I advise you, before you offer the Nation such stuff in future, to let me see the words. If you do that, you will be safe." "Yes," said one of the choristers, "the citizen knows all about the cut of a thing." Lainez did not understand the hidden meaning of these words till subsequently, when he discovered that the delicate friend of art was—the executioner.

At that period, however, music was the only occupation at all elevated to which a man dared devote himself, without being suspected of aristocratic tendencies—and, on the other hand, music offered a guaranty that its votaries did not trouble themselves about ideas of freedom. All the elegant wives of the Terrorists cultivated it, and Mme. Tallien, subsequently the Princess Chimay, and the grandmother of one of the best female pupils Chopin had, was a zealous admirer of the art. Napoleon, too, as an artillery officer, liked music and musicians. Later, it is true—according to the unanimous testimony of all the memoirs referring to him—he regarded music only as the best means of amusing the people harmlessly. We must, however, not omit to state that it was at his immediate suggestion that Spontini wrote *Ferdinand Cortez*, and Cherubini his *Requiem*. There is another fact, also not to be passed over in silence. He frequently enunciated opinions with regard to music as surprisingly just as those he uttered in conversation with Goethe respecting *Werther* and dramatic poetry, opinions to which, in his later years, the poet-prince refers in his annals with admiration.

Opera was thus tolerably supported in France, but not so concerts. In the year 1725, Philidor,

* From a letter "On Modern Society and Music," by H. Ehrlich.

† Query—Thomas Britton?

‡ All these facts are taken from Herr Pohl's interesting book, *Mozart und Haydn in London*.

brother of the composer and celebrated chess-player, founded the "Concerts Spirituels," which, during Lent, and on grand fast-days, when there was no opera, were given in a large room at the Tuileries, and at which sacred choruses and airs of the period alternated with instrumental solos, and with concertos for the violin and the oboe. The enterprise was exceedingly flourishing between 1770 and 1780, so much so, indeed, that Mozart considered it an honor to write a Symphony for it. During the time of the Revolution the Concerts Spirituels were discontinued. Somewhere about 1750, a Société d'Amateurs had been formed, but it ceased to exist even before the Revolution. In fact, people in Paris did not care a great deal for concerts.

In Italy, even from the sixteenth century, opera had made such progress that there was no room for the development of instrumental music. The fiddle alone, as the vocal instrument, could boast of great artists; the male sopranists exercised their throats in runs which only the most eminent violinists could execute with equal rapidity and correctness, and the violinists, moreover, took every possible pains to produce a noble and grand tone upon their instruments. Their compositions are even now models. With regard to pianists, the only one of eminence is Domenico Scarlatti, a remarkable personage, inasmuch as, in his Piano Sonatas, he treats the instrument in such a manner that we feel inclined to believe he must have been acquainted with, and have studied, Bach's works. There is one fact which we may look upon as certain: owing to the almost incredible development of the art of singing—about which Mozart's letters from Italy contain some astounding facts—instrumental music was merely cultivated to some extent by amateur societies and at the various Courts, in the last, as in the present century, concerts possessing no power of attraction for the Italians. With regard now to concert-giving in Germany during the past century—in so far as it is possible to obtain trustworthy information—we must particularly mention one fact which at first sight appears strange, namely, that there were few or no concerts precisely where music was most general. In Vienna, even in Mozart's time, there were only Subscription Concerts (*Subscriptions-Academien*, as they were denominated), that is to say, concerts got up by those musicians who gave a great many lessons, and who went about with a list to their patrons, to whom, and by whose assistance, they endeavored to dispose of tickets. How unproductive, however, such manoeuvres were, is proved by a letter of the year 1784 from Mozart, in which he informs his father with great glee that he had 174 subscribers for his three concerts, that being thirty more than Richter and Fischer together, who were the most popular teachers of the period. The infrequency of these concerts admits, however, of an easy explanation, if we only bear in mind that all noblemen had their own private musical establishment: gave concerts in their own houses; and generally paid artists magnificently. Hence people who in any way belonged to good society had heard every celebrated artist so often at private concerts that public concerts had but little attraction for them. Only something particularly unusual could reckon upon any great success. This was especially true of female fiddlers, among whom a Mlle. Ringbauer and a Mlle. Strinaschi were as celebrated in those days as Miles. Milanollo and Ferni are in our own.

Very different was the state of things in the North. The higher classes there hardly troubled their heads at all about music; but among the classes of burghers and Government officials, on the other hand, music was very generally cultivated, even so far back as a little after 1770, and concerts were everywhere well attended. But we must not assume that a regard for music was the sole principle at work; so far from this being the case, we may conclude with certainty from the light writings of the period that concerts were regarded as the most agreeable and most becoming class of entertainment by many worthy families, only because the latter entertained conscientious scruples against going to the theatre; this

was probably the case more especially in the Protestant parts of the country. Between 1770 and 1780, there was not in the whole of north, or middle Germany, a single town of any importance, where there were not regular concerts of amateurs or professional musicians. Thus in Stralsund there was a concert every fortnight, and there were concerts also in Magdeburg, Erfurt, Ludwigslust, Coburg, Schleusingen, Detmold, and Nordhausen. At Göttingen, Forkel founded concerts in 1780, and it is highly amusing to hear him talking at that time of the decay of opera, and of church music, and praising up his concerts as the only place of refuge for good music. According to all accounts, Hamburg seems to have been the Promised Land for travelling virtuosi. Dresden was highly celebrated for its chapel, and, when, after the battle of Kesselsdorf, Frederick the Great entered the Saxon capital, one of his first commands was to the effect that he wished to hear a concert. In Berlin, Bachmann's Subscription Concerts existed in 1751. Some time after 1780, they were superseded by Hurka's Orchestral Concerts, in which the Royal Chapel took part, and which were attended by the Royal family. At that time, also, there was a concert saloon for the Jewish colony in the "Flieschen Haus," the monthly subscription for three persons being one thaler and eight groschens. A Mme. Lewy, a Mme. Wolff, and Herr Flies, appeared there as pianists. The papers said nothing save what was favorable about the music, but added that there was too much talking, and too much bowing and scraping for any one to be able to hear it well. Between 1780 and 1790, Reichardt founded Concerts Spirituels, on the Parisian model; symphonies by Dittersdorf, Benda, and Kuhnau, were the order of the day. Solo-players also gave performances. The favorite concert instruments were the flute, the French horn, and the fiddle; the oboe, the clarinet, and bassoon, were also highly esteemed. The last-named instrument, moreover, was, even at the commencement of the present century, frequently employed for solos at concerts in Berlin. I myself heard a Berlin bassoonist, later than 1830, play, in Vienna, variations on "An Alexis send' ich dich." The worthy man looked as deeply moved when playing the motive as a lyric tenor looks in a highly sentimental part. The piano, now so fearfully tormented, was then but rarely used as a solo concert-instrument. The music catalogues of that time, down to the year 1810, contain only trios, and other concerted pieces, but very few brilliant fantasias, and works of that description. The facts that I here adduce were not to be found in one book, but have been collected from the most various journals and periodical publications.

(To be continued.)

Italy.

AMERICAN ARTISTS IN FLORENCE. — THOMAS BALL.—THE SALON OF LISZT.—KAULBACH.

We take the following extracts from the Correspondence of the *Chicago Tribune*. The letter is dated May 29, 1868.

From the hill of Bellosguardo, where there are several handsome villas, the view is magnificent. It was here that Hawthorne had his home when he lived in Florence. The observatory, from whence he no doubt often contemplated the wonderful loveliness of the Val d'Arno and its grand framework of near and distant mountains, is still pointed out as *Donatello's Tower*—so called from the hero of that name described in "The Marble Faun."

Here, too, is the villa Albizzi, which Galileo occupied for a long time. Over the entrance is his bust and an inscription.

On another hill, not far distant, POWERS, the sculptor is building a beautiful house. It stands just off the fine, broad, cypress-lined road ascending to the Poggio Imperiale—a palace built by the Duchess Magdalen of Austria in 1622. It is beyond the Porta Romana, but all the better for that. It is so much healthier outside than within the city's walls. Near by the sculptor BALL is about erecting a fine house and studio. It will not be commenced, however, until he returns from America, whither he has now gone to set up in bronze his grand equestrian statue of Washington. It is to be hoped that this will give

the Bostonians more satisfaction than Story's statue of Everett. It doubtless will, for competent judges pronounce it the best sculpture of its kind in America being distinguished as it is,—in spite of a pose that is somewhat conventional and unavoidably so,—by wonderful individuality and character. Indeed, I suppose there are few sculptors so successful as he in catching any peculiarity, whether it be that of attitude or feature, and making it serve his purpose in a portraiture. His likenesses are always astonishingly vivid, and yet they are something more, for he succeeds in rendering, as few rarely can, what I understand some writer to have meant when he spoke of "the idea as well as the fact of a face."

His busts of Webster, Everett, and Starr King are particularly renowned. They are all equally good, but that of the former attracted me even more than the others. I am glad we are to have it in New York. It has been so much admired and sought for that only the purse-venance of our capitalist, Mr. Aspinwall—so a punning friend told us—has at last secured it for the New England Society in our city.

A bust of Liszt was amongst the first we saw on entering the studio. It is considered, by all who have seen the great pianist, an uncommonly faithful portrait, for he has a difficult face to manage. As I saw it in profile I was again reminded of his resemblance to Washington [!]¹—a likeness I had observed when I saw him in Rome. That was a memorable visit—one I shall not soon forget—not merely because I heard such music as I never expect to hear again, but because I found myself unwillingly drawn into a somewhat animated discussion as to the respective merits of European and American pianos. My antagonist was a certain English Lord, who insisted, with considerable warmth, that the instruments of Erard were unrivalled in durability, in brilliancy of tone, in power, in the capacity for standing in tune, and, above all, for resisting changes of climate. In fine, they were the only piano-fortes in the world that a musician should countenance. Of course, I defended those of my own country, and you can fancy how delighted I was when Liszt himself came to my assistance, confirming all I had said by pointing to a magnificent Chickering grand, standing invitingly open at the end of his fine *salon*. Lord H. was evidently much astonished, and had nothing more to say for himself. He soon took his departure, and shortly after, to our great satisfaction, Liszt offered to play. I was with a German lady—herself an accomplished musician—though merely an amateur—who is one of the Abbé's greatest favorites. When we rose to go he detained us by the promise that as soon as the crowd abated he would give us some music. Meanwhile he took us into an inner chamber where he showed us some sketches his friend Gustav Doré had given him, and some photographs. This room, like the outer and larger apartment, was redolent with the perfume of flowers—all having been sent him by his women-admirers. The piano was covered with loose sheets of music and exquisite bouquets, one of which, I remarked, was in itself a complete volume of that amatory and adulatory language it is supposed to be possible to convey through floral offerings.

It is hardly to be wondered at that Liszt is spoiled—as even his friends confess he is—for his whole life has been made up of a long series of triumphs and flatteries. Even now, as an Abbé, partially retired from the world, he holds weekly a levee that would turn almost any man's head; that is, if the homage of rank and wealth, of wit and beauty could produce that effect. The day that we were there his visitors kept "coming and going like waves of the sea," bewildering one by their different nationalities, their titles, and, above all, by their obsequiousness to their host.

There were Polish Counts and Countesses, Russian nobles, German Barons and Baronesses without number; Italians of all ranks, from an obscure sculptor to a Prince; Spanish artists and ambassadors; two or three English Lords; Americans; and one nonchalant French Marquis, who, being invited to linger with us, afterwards laughed cynically at what he called "the virginity of my impressions." But who, excepting a *blanc* Parisian, would not have been enthusiastic! "Breathes there the man with soul so dead!" to make a new application of the old words. Everything conspired to brighten the effect produced upon us all, but I had the advantage of others, for it was the first time I had ever heard the great pianist, and "all first things are voted best." To begin with: The time was favorable. It was getting toward twilight—just that hour when music most enthalls. All was quiet within—without there were only four of us to listen—and we could all look out through the great window beyond the piano—over the lonely Campo Vaccino—toward the West, where the ruins of an ancient imperial palace outlined themselves against a sky of fading gold and purple—a picture

lovely at any time, but doubly so when seen under the influence of such a spell as only music can produce.

When Liszt began to play he looked like another being. His self-consciousness gradually vanished, and the complacency left his mouth. His face spoke music no less than the instrument beneath his wonderful hands. It was as eloquent as that of the most impassioned orator. He was no longer the man, but the master.

I sat where I could see his profile, and while he was thundering over the bass notes, bracing himself, as it were, against his hands, I thought, as I have before said, of our General Washington, whose bust I had seen the day before in the villa of Prince Doria. Even in repose his features bear a likeness, but when they are in action the resemblance is more positive. [!] Some have likened him to Dante, but his face lacks the severity and solemnity of the poet's.

I had heard of the peculiarity of his touch, and now I particularly remarked it. He does not strike the instrument. The tones seem to follow his finger ends as if the keys had been magnetized. Even his *tours de force* are made rather by up than down strokes. He seems literally to draw the sounds from the instrument.

He gave us first a little caprice in the waltz time by his son-in-law Bilow; then, something of his own—a composition illustrating certain phases in the life of St. Francis—his hopes, his fears, his mortal agony, his final release and transport—a work requiring great feeling and great energy of execution; a favorite theme, but one that he never renders, he told my German friend, unless he feels that he has sympathetic listeners. This work has been illustrated for him by Gustave Doré. One of the pictures we saw. It was treated with the same vigor and imaginative power that originated the designs for Dante's Inferno. But this idea of putting the life of a Catholic priest into the Chiaro scuro of music and painting reminds me of the experiences of Gottschalk, who avowed that he perceived music through every sense; "the chord of the diminished seventh, the perfume of the heliotrope, the color blue and the taste of pine-apple all producing the same sensation."

Besides this bust of Liszt at Mr. Ball's in Florence, I saw a portrait of him in the studio of Kaulbach at Munich. It had been made, the artist told me, when Liszt was a much younger man, as one could clearly see; and yet it was very like him as he is now. He will never lose, probably, his slightly theatrical manner, nor his peculiar pose. He would not be Liszt if he did. It has become quite natural for him to be unnatural and eccentric.

What a contrast KAULBACH offered! We found him just about noon, standing under the one great window of his studio, wrapped in a long coat lined with fur—as picturesque as one of his own creations, but as simple and unaffected as a child. Not but that he was enthusiastic, as most of the Germans are, quaint, and at times charmingly imperial in his gestures, particularly when he received some new guest with a suave smile, and motioned him to a seat with a sweep of his right hand. But the predominating impression the man made upon you was a pleasant one. You did not merely marvel at his genius—you admired also his simplicity, and respected his dignity of character.

His cartoons, as you know, are, perhaps, more wonderful than his finished works in color. At all events, we had an opportunity of comparing the two, for the crayon drawing of a subject called "Charity," and a beautiful woman of the blonde type surrounded by three or four babies of different sizes, stood side by side with the nearly completed picture in oils then on his easel. The latter is destined for the United States, I am glad to say, having been purchased for seven thousand dollars by an American.

Like the most of his countrymen, Kaulbach expressed much interest in "that land of progress beyond the sea," saying that he liked better to paint pictures for us than for any other nation—that it gave him pleasure to remember that, like many of his compatriots, some of his best works had found a home in America. It was very pleasant to meet so hearty an admirer of our national institutions—although I was hardly surprised—having usually found the Germans more than any other nation capable of appreciating our advantages and excusing our disadvantages. Hepworth Dixon was not so far wrong when he compared Prussia to America, and in the next breath spoke of both as the two great Teutonic States. Certainly, amongst all the Europeans we have met, we feel most at home with the Germans, and I am safe in saying that no foreigners cross the ocean who so soon make themselves at home with us, who so soon acquire our habits, and learn our customs.

M. Rubinstein at the Philharmonic.

As was to be expected, the great attraction was M. Antoine Rubinstein. Without disputing that gentleman's right to the position, we must say, for ourselves, that his performance always gives us a feeling of sadness. If he played less well this would not be. When a man comes forward with pretensions in excess of his abilities, he is put down as having mistaken his position, and himself only is the sufferer. But M. Rubinstein is literally overloaded with ability. His execution is prodigious, his touch is wonderful in its command over every gradation of tone, and his feeling for the work he has to do is intense. But to such extent does he possess these gifts that—as we have said—he is overloaded. M. Rubinstein less endowed would be M. Rubinstein more acceptable. Without judgment and self-restraint (which are necessary for the due use of wealth of any sort) he plays with the key-board in very wantonness; his tonal power becomes an exhibition of sensational tricks, and his artistic sympathy a passion which masters its possessor, forcing him to extremes, such as make the judicious grieve. Endowed with everything but the power to use his endowments well, M. Rubinstein resembles a tree which, pruned and clipped, would have yielded fruit, but, left to itself, makes only a prodigious show of leaves. Hence we do not hesitate to say that the Wallachian pianist is a stumbling-block in the path of art. Whenever he plays it is not the composer who comes forward with his ideas, but it is M. Rubinstein with his almost grotesque impulsiveness, his thunderous tones, and his wild gesticulations, at which the unthinking public wonder and applaud. This is sad enough, but when one remembers what M. Rubinstein might have done for the art he injures, the subject becomes almost painful. After these remarks we need not dwell upon the performance of Monday last. Suffice it to say that, remembering the marvellously perfect interpretation of the composer's widow, Schumann's concerto in A minor seemed a caricature of itself, and that Handel would scarcely have recognized his own work (the air with variations, from the *Suite* in D minor) had he been present. Yet the Philharmonic audience cried "Bravo!" and applauded with boisterous delight. After all, how hollow is the ring of our boasted musical culture, when hammered at by a Rubinstein.—*Sund. Times*, June 14.

The Rubinstein Recitals.

Herr Antoine Rubinstein has given a series of three recitals at the Hanover Square Rooms, in the course of which he has emphatically proved himself one of the most marvellous and at the same time one of the most provokingly unequal pianists of the day. We cannot agree with this gentleman's exaggerated readings of the sonatas of Beethoven, from which he selected the C minor, Op. 111, the D minor, Op. 31, and the E major, Op. 109—the middle one of which, in our opinion, he played best, because with least pretension; nor can we approve the manner in which he renders many parts of Mendelssohn's *Variations Series*, or any part of the same composer's *Presto Scherzando* in F sharp minor. What satisfied us most entirely was Herr Rubinstein's performances of his own compositions (without caring greatly for the compositions), of Schumann's *Etude Symphonique* and *Carnaval* or *Scenes Mignonnes*—which last, in many instances, were astonishing (as, for example, the variations in full chords belonging to the *Etudes*), of one or two of the graceful *Nocturnes* by John Field, and of Mozart's exquisitely beautiful *Rondo* in A minor. In the *Nocturnes* of Field and the *Rondo* of Mozart the Wallachian pianist subdued his impetuosity in such a manner as to delight all lovers of genuine music and unaffected playing. This was not so, however, with the B minor *Scherzo* of Chopin, which was taken at so rapid a pace as to be scarcely intelligible, nor with the examples severally taken from Scarlatti, J. S. Bach, and Handel. In the music of Liszt, as in his own "transcriptions," for piano, of the overture to *Egmont* and the Wedding March from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Herr Rubinstein is, of course, quite at ease; and, though we greatly prefer hearing both the overture and the march played, as they were intended, by an orchestra, we cannot be blind (or deaf) to the tremendous power he brings to their execution. Herr Rubinstein is at once (except Liszt) the loudest and (except Chopin) the softest player we ever heard. He has both extremes at ready command, and as often abuses as he makes fair use of either. He can play with extraordinary rapidity, as well as with extraordinary force; but he can also overdo sentiment until it becomes monotonous and tiresome—as an instance of which we may cite his performance of a small piece (either a *Moment Musical*, or an *Impromptu*) by Schubert, in A flat, the simplest matter in the world, but which Herr Ru-

binstein made so much of as almost to smother it in his excessive tenderness. That Herr Rubinstein is exceptionally gifted cannot be questioned; his memory is wonderful, and his mechanism, if not exactly irreproachable, is prodigious; but that he always, or even generally, makes the best use of his gifts, we cannot think. It would be well if it were otherwise; for in that case we should have one great artist the more; while, as it is, we have merely one to add to the growing list of executants who, instead of ministering to art, force art to minister to them. The result is not legitimate; and all who have the ability should at the same time have the frankness to say as much, in the name of art, and for the love of it.—*London Times*.

(From the "Daily News.")

No public performance of any kind, whether musical or elocutionary, can produce much impression if devoid of impulse; but it is essential that such impulse should be under the control of self-restraint, and this is scarcely always the case with M. Rubinstein's playing. His programme was divided into four portions, with an interval of a few minutes' rest between, the number of pieces performed being fifteen—all played from memory. The selection commenced with a transcription of Beethoven's overture to *Egmont*, in which the features of the orchestral score were reproduced with a mastery power and comprehensiveness. In the next performance, Beethoven's sonata in C minor, Op. 111 (the last of the thirty-two solo sonatas), we had especial occasion to remark those inequalities which are so much to be regretted in M. Rubinstein's performances. The greater part of the *allegro con brio* was given with grand emphasis and admirable phrasing, but with an exaggerated force towards the climax that went far to destroy the effect previously created. The lovely, tranquil theme of the *allegretto* and some of the variations were played with a refinement and grace that left nothing to be desired; while, on the other hand, some portions were given in the exaggerated style already alluded to. The air with variations in D minor, from Handel's *Suites de Pièces*, was played to absolute perfection in point of power and style, with the exception of the *coda*, which was taken at a speed and with a redundancy of energy that amounted to something very like caricature. Following this was a graceful *Rondo* of Emanuel Bach, which was given with unalloyed refinement of style—then Scarlatti's "Cat's Fugue" and sonata in A major; the latter another specimen of exaggeration in speed and force. Schumann's variations in C sharp minor (a grand work in spite of what his detractors may say) would have been a perfect performance but for the almost wild exaggeration of the last movement. The greatest instance, however, of Herr Rubinstein's want of self-control was in the performance of his own study (called, we believe, the "False-note Study," from each phrase beginning on a dissonant note). In this piece the player's unrestrained impulse amounted almost to frenzy. That Herr Rubinstein is a great player it would be folly in any one to dispute. His execution is unbounded, and he produces the utmost possible volume of tone from the instrument, without, as in the case of Liszt, involving the breakage of strings and hammers. He has also the most refined and delicate touch, and great clearness of phrasing and rhythmic decision. It is, therefore, absolutely provoking to find such high and rare qualities, and such exceptional capabilities, so frequently disfigured by the excesses of ungoverned enthusiasm. These alternations and contradictions of style were noticeable in other portions of Herr Rubinstein's programme.

Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro," at Drury Lane.—Kellogg, Nilsson, Tietjens, &c.

A Philadelphian in London writes home to the *Bulletin*, June 30, as follows:

Entering the auditorium, I found it well filled and our old acquaintance, Ardit, marshalling his forces for the overture. The Drury Lane Theatre is neither handsome nor comfortable, but the mind fires with a train of old, classic associations, and in passing Garrick, Clive, Quin, Bracegirdle and Peg Woffington in rapid review, you little reck of the difference between these narrow, straight-backed seats and those luxurious siestas in our own Academy of Music at home. Neither is there visible the elegance of dress—nor, may I add, that universality of female beauty, which, when bedecked with flashing jewelry, at times cause our own parquet, parquet circle and balcony to seem like a vast snowdrift with its glistening ice-points twinkling in the rays of the noon-day sun. I am but speaking the words of candor, moreover, when I pronounce Ardit's orchestra inferior to that

of the New York Philharmonic Society, or to the one employed by Ullman, when he produced the *Huguenots*, with the great cast of Formes, Poinset, Laborde & Co., some years ago. But the curtain rises. Enter Gassier as "Figaro," more rotund of body and florid of complexion than we saw him in Philadelphia; and with him our own Clara Louise Kellogg, the "Susannah" of the cast, whose popularity here is very great. Gassier mouths his text, but acts cleverly enough. His light baritone has not gained strength with increasing corporeal development, and the sprightliness, vocal purity and facile execution of our American cantatrice shuts hopelessly from him all possible chance of sensation in the opening duo. Clara Louise sweeps the board of every obstacle, until a small door opens and enter Mlle. Christine Nilsson, a sprightly, lithe, beautiful blonde from the land of the Norsemen, the *Cherubino* of the evening. How her soft blue eyes light up with genial mirth as her pretty little feet trip down toward the other two artistes amid thunders and ever-increasing thunders of applause. How gracefully she swings the rich, satin-lined mantle, thrown negligé over her well-rounded shoulders, as she stoops to gather a brace of advance bouquets. There is a school-girl artlessness in all of her actions that prepossesses at once, much like the charming *naïvete* of Piccolomini when we first saw her in America. Now, dear *Bulletin*, I am not about to pronounce Nilsson the best singer I have ever heard. My own tendency is rather to that species of old fogysm which prompts musical connoisseurs to hold fast to some early ideal. You may hear such as these exclaim: "Ah! your Parepas, your Labordes, your Jenny Linda, may be all very fine, but, my enthusiastic greenhorn, you never heard Mrs Wood in the *Sonnambula*!" In like wise have I steadily throughout my career opposed Bosio to all new comers, and I still maintain her lasting superiority. However, I do aver that Mlle. Nilsson possesses the purest and tenderest soprano voice it has ever been my good fortune to hear, so far as relates to mere quality. She has not the power nor the *tours de force* of Titiens, nor yet the finished ease of Kellogg; but there are seemingly magnetic influences in her finely-spun, delicate tones, such as communicate with the inner souls of her hearers at once, warming the latter with sympathetic passion and thrilling emotions of delight. I could easily fancy an entire audience in tears over some plaintive ballad, interpreted by this sweetest and purest of voices, and the artless simplicity and almost childlike grace of its management. Titiens, who sustained the role of "La Comtesse," presents a striking corporeal as well as artistic antithesis to the lovely bird of song just depicted. She is tall, inclined to *embonpoint*, rather ungainly, and possesses a good-natured Teutonic face, surrounded with copious folds of dark hair. Her clear, ringing, flexible soprano bespeaks fire and passion, coupled with intense energy of action; and she treads the boards with the *savoir faire* of an established favorite. I can fancy her greatness in such roles as "Elvira" in *Ernani*, or "Leonora" in the *Trovatore*. Altogether, the cast of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, last night, was immense: three song-sisters of different nationalities, vying in friendly contention: Titiens, German; Kellogg, American; Nilsson, Danish; while the rest of the troupe comprised Gassier (French), Santley (English, Sims Reeves's present rival), and a polygot chorus, gathered from various lands.

Pauline Lucca and Patti alternated at the Covent Garden. I should certainly have gone to-night to note the progress of our American-bred Adelina, but who can survive the Fille du Regiment at this late day? To-morrow night the first named is to take farewell of the English stage in an act of *Fra Diavolo*, another from *Faust*, and the fourth of *L'Africaine*. And so in joyous anticipation of a feast thus bountiful, allow me to close these hastily penned notes.

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Music in Spain.

The distinguishing character of music purely Spanish, is great vivacity of rhythm, which even borders upon vehemence in pieces of a lively kind. Most of their national airs are in triple time, and in the minor mode. The species of music in which the Spaniards most delight is the *Romance*. They have many beautiful compositions of this kind; the melody is of a languishing cast, and always dies away at the close. Their lively airs terminate suddenly; the *tonadilla*, "Yo que soi contrabandista," the *seguedilla*, "Es amor un ciego," the *trana*, "Ha un triste calasero," are examples which will give a pretty accurate notion of all these different kinds of airs, the greater part of which are traced out upon nearly the same pattern. The guitar is the instrument most generally employed; it is quite as national as their heads and their chocolate, and is to be found in eve-

ry house, from that of the peer to that of the barber. All play the guitar; all have a tact in playing it, from the amateur who performs "por musico" as they express it, to the artist who employ it professionally. The last allows the nail of the forefinger and thumb of the right hand to grow to a considerable length for the purpose of producing more clear decided tones. As the *cigarito* is also constantly held between these nails, they acquire a yellow tinge, which seems to be considered as ornamental. The *rascado* (from *rascar*, to scrape) is the favorite mode of playing among the peasants; almost every leading chord is formed by striking all the strings together with the thumb or back of the hand. This *rascado* has no unpleasant effect, especially where some bright-eyed *Senorita* introduces it with judgment, and gives it variety of expression. Serenades are very frequent in Spain; the nights in that climate being so beautiful, and the lovers so unwearied in their gallantry. The swain steals to the window of the maiden of his heart, and, favored by the silence of night, breathes all the fervor of his soul in the romances which he sings. Sometimes he comes attended by his companions, and then a number of voices and guitars are heard in concert. The favored *Senorita* listens from behind her curtain, proudly conscious of the power of her charms, and readily distinguishes the voice which goes most nearly to her heart.

The Spaniards have no instruments peculiar to themselves. The castanets, used by their dancers to mark the measure of the fandango and bolero, and which they employ with such grace and agility, have been known for ages in Provence. The pipe and tabor of the Biscayans are the same with those employed in the South of France. The bagpipe of Galicia and Catalonia resembles the instrument of the same kind common in Beaujolais and Auvergne. The *pandero* differs in no respect from the small drum or tabor. The *zambomba* does not deserve the name of a musical instrument; and the same thing may be said of the *dulzaina* of the peasants of Valencia. The sounds of this primitive kind of pipe are shrill and discordant; scarcely any thing like a melody can be played upon it; and indeed it more resembles the mew of a cat than any other sound. The Valencians, however, are passionately fond of this wretched instrument; it figures in their festivals and processions; the viaticum never leaves a church without being accompanied by a number of pious pipers, who rend the ear with the screams of the *dulzaina*.*

It appears, from what has been said, that music, properly so called, has extended its dominion only to Madrid and the larger cities of Spain; the rest of the country being in almost total ignorance of this enchanting art.—*Revue Musicale*.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, AUGUST 1, 1868.

"The Heavens are as Brass"!

Such answer brings the youth sent out by Elijah (in the Oratorio), in the hot drouth, to look for signs of rain. But fancy that extreme heat aggravated by the sound of brass, brass bands on every hand, relentless, unavoidable as brassy skies,—common experience here during the late solstitial days of 90° to 100° Fahrenheit!—would not the torture of that drouth have been more exquisite than Dante ever dreamed of? "The Heavens are as brass above me," calls the soprano of the messenger; "and the earth about us," dryly chant or gasp the congregation in response; "all, all is brass" becomes the hotly whirling motive of a chorus fugue. The chosen people of the Prophet's time were not so badly off as we are; we seem to be living in the real Brazen Age, and not the one of fable; perhaps the hot, loud music, fiercely expressive in the dogday weather, is only the unconscious and too faithful symbol of the self-advertising, notoriety-seeking, loud, "fast," brassy spirit of this advanced day of Christendom!

Brass music certainly is heating, so that the

* This kind of pipe was much used in France and other countries during the middle ages; and it has given its name to the *dulciana* stop of the organ.

terms *loud* and *hot* become convertible to one much persecuted by it in warm weather. "The heavens are as brass." The image has often occurred to us; never more forcibly than lately at an academic festival, where at the dinner table, beneath cool classic shades, while wit and poetry sparkled on all sides refreshingly, suddenly all were startled, stunned, distracted by such stentorian bursts of brass band music, at close quarters with us in the not spacious hall, having us completely at its mercy (merciful brass!), that all at once we became conscious of a profuse perspiration starting out from every pore; and the dose was frequently repeated. Did any doctor ever know enough to prescribe *brass band* in a case of fever? Its sudorific virtues, too well known by sad experience, though not perhaps yet scientifically recorded, might be utilized.

Bands of brass instruments, martial bands as such, are good in their own way, and useful for their purpose; Mars, who created, cannot spare them: but they belong not to the cultus of Apollo. In the noisy street, the camp, the battle field, they are serviceable, because their sound goes further, reaches the ear in spite of the surrounding Babel; and the arrangement is so economical, the sonority being great for the small number of "pieces." On other than martial occasions, much of course depends upon the kind of music which they undertake to discourse. Being for the most part of a loud, coarse, bloated quality of tone, or *timbre*, and being all homophonous, or of the same family, without fine variety or contrast, all shades of one and the same color variously diluted, mere brass instruments must be much limited in their range of subjects and expression. Except in martial, brisk and stirring strains of rather simple harmony, their collective sound soon grows monotonous, stale, unrefined and uninspiring. For, whatever they attempt outside of their own narrow circle is but coarse and vulgar imitation. The sentimentalism of brass music is of a positively rancid quality; the bread without such buttering is sweeter. When it affects to "transcribe" and arrange for you love-sick "gems" from operas, dramatic scenes, or florid, flute-like melodies, it only caricatures and makes them vulgar; witness the sentimental cornet solo business—long-eared Nick Bottom roaring you like any nightingale! But it is the fashion, and Fashion with her sweeping train covereth a greater multitude of monstrosities and sins than ever Charity with modest mantle did.

Where music merely serves to add a little liveliness and grace, by way of accompaniment and humble incident to some occasion mainly social, ceremonial, literary, or what not, we do not expect of it all that we should of a purely musical occasion, where Music figures as principal and in her high artistic character. But really in the first case it would seem a simple, reasonable requirement, that the music should in style and subject show some adaptation to that which precedes and follows it. Not wind up an *In memoriam* with a polka, nor play a dirge or a tragical Verdi *Miserere* after a humorous impromptu. Yet this is what, for lack of some presiding thought, some prearrangement of a programme, happens every year with the musical part of our academic anniversaries at Harvard. Our complaint of last year has to be repeated, and the details of the record must be almost the same. On Phi Beta Kappa day, for instance, after the poem,

which formed the principal literary exercise, the company were obliged to listen ten or fifteen minutes to a potpourri from *Der Freyschütz*, in which the overture and all the horrors and diablerie of the Wolf's Glen scene made day hideous through the loud, coarse medium of a brass band! Granting the music to be ever so good, and the arrangement also, and that it might have sounded by no means badly in the open air, at a good distance, as in the evening concerts upon Boston Common, here it was wholly out of place, apropos to nothing, and both by incongruity of matter and unmitigated loudness of manner only disturbed with the best will to refresh. Afterwards at the dinner in Harvard Hall, where choice spirits meet and little speeches, verses, witty impromptus, tender college reminiscences make the sweet hours fly fast, the same sonorous enginery of brass is pent up within the same four walls with us, and while the mind would fain prolong the influence of some thoughtful, sincere, perhaps playful words, out burst the big and overwhelming sounds from those brazen lungs of the Sax family, and the spell is rudely, hopelessly broken; no conversation and no thinking possible until that awful din has ceased. Again, our poet, who is always young, recites some verses, half humorous, yet of the kind that makes the tears start, about how we meet still as boys on the ground of these old college memories, however different now in fortune, sphere or title, and ending with an epitaph: *Hic jacet Joe, hic jacet Bill!* What follows, as if eagerly waiting like the winds of Aëolus to be let loose, but blast upon blast of a right rollicking loud polka! As if we had all set to it madly dancing over the graves of Bill and Joe!

These instances suffice to show the hap-hazard incongruity that reigns on these occasions. The musical selections come in wholly unassorted, just to fill pauses anyhow,—we can hardly say just for relief, though doubtless that is the excellent intention. Now music which neither wins to silence nor admits of conversation, can as well be spared. No music is often better than any but just the right music. Too often we employ it merely because it is the custom and we think we must, only to find that we have invited a troublesome guest and on the whole a bore. If the guest be congenial, be in harmony with the occasion, be not over-loud and prominent, say the fit thing at the fit time, respond in the right key or not at all,—then very well, he is a real gain; otherwise we need him not. Such a guest, such a true boon companion might music be in such a "feast of wit and flow of soul." The conditions are: 1. That the musical selections shall meet the mood of the moment, shall take up and continue, and soar beyond the power of speech with, the sentiment awakened by the speaker's voice; or else afford a gentle, natural and graceful transition into the right mood for what comes next; 2. that it come in some gentle and civilian garb, not in full brazen panoply of war; that is, instead of a brass band, inevitably and immitigably noisy inside of a room, however pleasant outside, and of too coarse a fibre for the handling of delicate subjects, let it come in the form of a small orchestra with strings, or even the classical string Quartet (some of our country colleges do wiser than Harvard in employing the Mendelssohn Quintette Club), or a part-song club of graduates and students,—either one or both of these combined. In short,

what is wanted is simply: music thoughtfully selected, and rendered by a gentle, refined combination of instruments or voices. Taste should preside at academic festivals if anywhere; strange, that where all else is intellectual, significant, high-toned and graceful, the music alone should be barbaric, and seem to have been dictated by the rowdy element of college life!

Now let us not be understood as making any criticism on the bands themselves. Some of them are excellent in their way and in their own proper sphere, and we are quite willing to extend that sphere beyond military music, to popular concerts in the open air, &c., although larger bands with reeds would be far preferable. Our concern is now with music at the University. We plead that Alma Mater, instead of still unconsciously lending her countenance to the old way of looking upon Music as a secondary matter, a mere part of the procession, an unconsidered trifle, playing about the same part as fans and ribbons, should now begin to avail herself of her fine opportunity for illustrating the true ministry of music as an equal Art among Arts, helping to make up a truly intellectual, consistent and inspiring feast, the other "humanities" of high, gentlemanly culture meeting her on equal terms. Why should not this whole business be organized and put upon the right ground once for all? Why should not the College place the responsibility, for instance, in the hands of the "Harvard Musical Association?" Here is a musical society which had its origin in Harvard College life, whose members are mainly Harvard graduates, and one of whose professed aims from the first has been to insist upon Music as an important element in a collegiate education:—it would seem to be high time that this Society were called upon to make good its profession, and practically prove its loyalty to Alma Mater in this way.—But we must leave the academic question, and come to a wider application of the theme with which we started,—consider the bands a little as they are heard all around us and form an element in the daily life University of the People.

CONCERTS ON THE COMMON.—All the bands are of brass.* This is partly fashion—of a bustling age,—partly economy, the bands depending for their support mainly on their military engagements. Some of them are very good brass bands, but brass bands are not good for every kind of music, and they are ambitious to attempt all kinds. They are the people's music and have much to do with forming the taste for better or for worse. Now it is natural that in this competition for the public ear and admiration they should bait the hook with novelties, strive to outstrip each other in offering "the last thing out," to keep up with the fashions, like the milliners and dry goods dealers; for these they watch the Opera as sharply as the milliners watch Paris. Bands deal chiefly in the musical fashions, as do the music shops; the first principle in the selection of their repertoires is to secure whatever "has a run," and serve it up as piquantly as possible, but by all means lose no time in getting it. Of course the fashion always changes; you miss the good old pieces that made you feel so well some years ago; you can no more get them in the present "season" than you can find another hat as comfortable, as sensible, as tasteful as the one you wore and liked so well last year. Much of the good old sterling music goes out, and much namby-pamby, frivolous and vulgar trash comes in: no matter, it is the fashion, at least where Fashion has her musical head-quarters, at the Opera house. So is it even with the florists; some dear old varieties of roses seem to have become extinct,—i. e. they are withdrawn in favor of new fashions.

Now this is well enough for fashion, and for the idle curiosity and light amusement of the moment;

* Shall we sing with Handel:

"Let us break our bands asunder?"

but it is not so well for the culture all the world might get from music. In that point of view it makes a vast difference what kind of music the popular bands select. Just now the frothy, vulgar Offenbach tunes rule the hour. These, with absurd potpourris or medleys of the most tragical with the most light and brilliant moments of the graver operas,—chowders of national airs (very rank with onion).—gouty solos upon burly tubas, or rapid, senseless variations *double-tongued* upon the cornet,—with now and then a Mendelssohn part-song, or some other classical "arrangement," just to save character with "the appreciative few," commonly make up the programmes. Still there is a great field for choice, and much depends upon the taste and temper of the master of the band. If he be a high-toned musician, respecting music as an Art, respecting himself too, he will not merely cater to the fashions and low habits of the day. He will make selections of intrinsic worth and beauty, in the full faith that the public will enjoy and love good music quite as well and better than bad, if they are only allowed to hear it as often. And he will as strenuously reject such music as does not suit the peculiar composition of his band.

He will not be too ready to translate Edgardo's misery or the love-lorn strains of tragic prima donnas into pumpkin-vine-y brass; he will deal very cautiously with the sensation operas; he will seek first of all to give music, and let the fashions take their chance. We are fashion's slaves in dress, in houses, manners, every thing external: it is the very end and aim of Art to free us from this slavery, to set Fashion at naught, to fix our thought on something that is intrinsic, permanent, essential, on "things of beauty" which are "joys forever."

Now the City Fathers do well to provide music on the Common. In the cool evenings it draws great crowds together, and so far as we have mingled in them we have seen nothing but cheerfulness, good order and most unmistakable enjoyment. The music as it is does not a little good; and it creates demand for more and better. That too is a good thing. Much is heard which captivates the general ear, and now and then a thing which good taste can take pleasure in. There might be much more of that sort, which, while conciliating the cultivated, would be none the less delightful to the many. We certainly remember seasons when our bands, if not so brilliant, so expert in solo execution, gave us better music on the whole. It would of course be better to have one large band, not military, but of a civic character, not all of brass, but with plenty of reeds and finer instruments. But with the brass bands as they are, there may be much improvement made by taste and care in the selections. And in this connexion we may pay a passing compliment to the *Germania Band*, which in the matter of its selections seems more shy of clap-trap than some of its rivals, really giving a generous proportion of good music, with musician-like arrangement, tasteful, effective, not extravagant or vulgar in the rendering, and (what is one of the last virtues in a brass band) playing together in tune. The other evening they were greatly enjoyed on the Common. The programme, among other things, included a pretty effective version of the *William Tell* overture, another of a song by Schubert, a good potpourri from the *Huguenots*, a sweet and soothing Serenade, &c.—*Brown's Brigade Band*, our oldest and one of the best, announce a series of promenade concerts in the Music Hall, from which we may hope good things,—provided it be not all brass.—We have only room to open the subject now.

ERRATA. In Mrs. Howe's poem, "The Footsteps of Song," printed in our last, some errors crept in through delay in transmission of the proof.

On page 277 of the Journal, 1st column, 13th line: for "sense" read "dear with pathos blends."—2nd column 5th line: for "master shrine" read "Capital of Rome."—4th line from bottom: for "there" read "then."—3d col., 24th line: for "Of" read "As Courage for the new world calls."

Page 278, 1st col., 4th line: "monarchs" for "monarch."—19th line: "whence" for "whence'er."—2nd line from bottom: "heaps" for "rears."

TOO MUCH SUCCESS.—The London *Athenæum* seems to think Miss Kellogg not beyond the need, even if she be beyond the reach, of criticism; it says:

"Mlle. Kellogg is attempting too much at once. Scarcely a week passes by without an assumption by her of some new part. The result is, that she comes before the public unprepared. She learns the notes, but she fails to catch the spirit by which the notes are animated. The costume she wears in one opera may differ from that which she wears in another, but the character is the same in both. 'La Figlia del Reggimento,' attempted by her last Saturday, was only *Amina* in the dress for *la vivandière*. The full-hearted daughter of the regiment has never been sketched so slightly as by Mlle. Kellogg, nor has the bright music of the part ever been sung with so little point and accent. The young American lady should go to school again, and work hard when she gets there. The best thing about 'La Figlia' at Drury

Lane is the chorus singing. The fine voices of the men come out like the rich red in a picture by Rubens."

Joseph von Wasiilewski, the biographer of Schumann, is writing a "History of the Violin." The book, which will soon be published, is one of unusual interest, from the fact that the author is not only a good violinist but also a man of refined education.

CANCAN-OPERA, &c.—This, with its next of kin, only more innocent, the burnt cork minstrelsy, brass band potpourries and *orgues de Barbarie*, is about the only music in vogue while the dog-star rages. The Offenbach fever is not a creditable symptom of an age which boasts itself so pure and enlightened; but perhaps it is in a fair way to work out its own cure, on the principle that measles and low humors have to come out on the surface or strike in and kill. Perhaps the more of it the better, until the fashion shall have run itself completely into the ground; and there are good hopes that this will not cost more than another season; for, according to the New York *Albion*:

It would seem that the public is to be surfeited next season with *opera bouffe*. If report speaks true, we are to have "three Richmonds" in the field. Of Mr. Bateman's arrangements the public are already apprised. In addition to these it is now said that Mr. Grau will abandon the French dramatic performances hitherto stipulated for by his lease, and substitute representations of Offenbach's works, for which a company is now being engaged. The theatre itself meantime is undergoing a very thorough reconstruction, by which its seating capacity will be increased and various other improvements secured. Nothing daunted by his failures of last season, Mr. Pike, it is said, will engage in the *opera bouffe* contest, and rise at once to an exceptional pre-eminence by the importation of the original *Grande Duchesse*—the fat, fair and forty Schneider—if she is to be won by either love or money. She will be supported by as many of the original artists as can be induced to leave *la belle France* for a transatlantic season. The reader is probably aware that the Schneider is at present personating that jovial monarch, the Duchesse, at the St. James', London, and that Mrs. Howard Paul is representing the same character in English garb at another establishment. Mr. Bateman's season at Niblo's—for which the most complete preparations have been made—will open on Monday. "Barbe Bleue" will be first presented, in which Mlle. Irma—the new *prima donna*—has created a continental reputation as Boulotte. Of the opera itself we understand that it is brimful of the same rollicking and irresistible humor that has made the "Grand Duchesse" so universal a favorite. The remainder of the cast is as follows: Princess Hermia, Mlle. Lambelle; Queen Clementine, Mlle. Duclos; Barbe Blue, M. Anjac; Prince Saphir, M. Dardignac; Count Oscar, M. Lagriffoul; Popolani, M. Duchesne; King Bobeche, M. Francis; Alvarez, M. Edgar. This, as will be seen, is an exceedingly strong distribution, even the secondary parts—as is customary on the French stage whenever possible—being given to first-class artists. The opera is divided into four acts, as follows: Act First, Forest and Castle of Barbe Bleue; Act Second, Palace of King Bobeche; Act Third, the Alchemists; Act Fourth, same as Act First. In the first and third acts, Messrs. Jarret and Palmer's Parisienne and Viennoise Ballet Troupe, with Mlle. Rosa as *première danseuse*, will be introduced.

The "Barbe Bleue" has since appeared, and its success is blazed abroad of course through all the trumpets of the New York press. Meanwhile we find a paragraph much to the purpose in the *Saturday Gazette* of this city:

On the 30th of December Mr. Bateman inaugurated Offenbach's French opera in this city, which affords comical opportunities for burlesque acting, for the utterance of innuendoes and the discharge of much grossness which is plainly unfit for the stage. There is a single scene in the "Grande Duchesse" which renders the piece insulting to delicate eyes, while in "La Belle Helene" moral filth is exposed, not that it may be a target for the shafts of sarcasm and ridicule, but merely because it is filthy. The music is in much pleasing and of that attractive, sparkling quality which lingers upon the ear; but the mass of musical people are forced to exercise the virtue of patience in order to reach the points which render these operas such a fruitful resource for leaders of orchestras and makers of hand organs.

Mr. Henry F. Chorley has retired from the London *Athenaeum*, after thirty-four years of connection with the musical department of that journal.

DEATH OF SAMUEL LOVER.—Died on Monday, at a pleasant retreat in Jersey, to which he had retired about 18 months since, Samuel Lover, wit, poet, novelist, musician, and artist. Mr. Lover's partial and indiscriminating friends were wont to compare him with Thomas Moore, but no one protested more energetically against the comparison than the deceased gentleman himself. He knew perfectly well that he filled a much lower position on the ladder of Fame, and was quite content to be regarded as the most successful among the numerous imitators of the great little man. One striking difference between Moore and Lover was that while the former was essentially the poet of the drawing-room, the muse of the latter appealed more generally to the people. Few of Moore's melodies were more popular in their day than "The Four-leaved Shamrock," "The Angel's Whisper," "Molly Bawn," and the "Low-backed Car." The similarity between Moore and Lover extended even to their personal appearance. Both were small men, with bright eyes and intensely Irish expression of countenance; both were in the habit of singing their own songs; and the statement which will be found more than once in Moore's biography, that the poet's singing was rather a recitation accompanied by the piano than the actual delivery of a song, applied equally to Lover. This peculiarity, admirable in a drawing-room, where the limited company can group round the piano, in a great measure prevented the success of a public entertainment which Lover essayed. Mr. Lover, who had for some time enjoyed a Government pension of £100 a year, was 70 years of age.—*Orchestra*, July 11.

PROGRESS (?)—The French papers are filled with delight at the aristocratic patronage which *Les Anglais* are bestowing upon Mme. Schneider, as La Grande Duchesse, at St. James's Theatre, and after describing the dresses, complexions, and other attributes of the princes, princesses, and "lords and ladies gay," who have crowded to hear Offenbach's music, they write with characteristic impudence that they will never again be able to accuse the English of being "behind the age."

With the following remark on "La Grande Duchesse" from the *Saturday Review* we cordially agree;—In the fact that "La Grande Duchesse," ably executed, is successful, there is nothing extraordinary. The sort of success that attends it is an evil sign of the times.—*London Choir*.

HANDEL v. OFFENBACH. "Punch" makes the following parallel:

"Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess Louis of Hesse were present during the second part of the performance of *Israel in Egypt*. It is to be regretted that, with this exception, the Handel Festival was not honored by the presence of any of the members of the Royal Family."—*Morning Paper*.

"The first performance of *La Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein* was honored with the presence of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess Louis of Hesse, H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Denmark, H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, H.R.H. the Prince of Teck, &c., &c., &c. The house was sparkling with the presence of royalty and nobility."—*Morning Paper*.

Chacun à son goût, eh M. Offenbach?

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S MUSIC BOOK. A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* says: "In the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge is Queen Elizabeth's Music-book, containing compositions for the pianoforte, or virginal of her time. The Queen is said to have been a skillful musician. Some pages of the book have been evidently often turned over, others but seldom looked at. The leaves that are soiled are those on which the simplest tunes are written: the others contain the variations and more intricate passages. Although her Majesty has the reputation of having been an accomplished performer upon the virginal, this music-book proves that she was wont to skip the more irksome compositions, and indulge in the less laborious pastime of playing the tunes only. It is an easy way of acquiring the reputation of a pianist, to get together many of the most difficult pieces of Thalberg, Liszt and others, and play only the melodies they arrange, avoiding the brilliant passages which are so difficult to master, and often so puzzling to listen to. I rather think Queen Elizabeth did this with the music of the Liszts and Thalbergs of her day, judging from her music-book."

Special Notices.

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE LATEST MUSIC.

Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

- The Happy Freedom loving Girl. S'g & Cho. 30
2. G to e. Adams.
Fine melody, in easy flowing style.
Flying Trapeze. For Guitar. 2. A to d. Hayden. 30
Popular comic song. Pretty air.
She's a Gal-o-mine. S'g & Ch. 2. Bb to f. Vance. 30
Sung in "Black-eyed Susan," who's the "Gal" referred to. Very sweet melody.
The Little Brown Jug. 2. Ab to e flat. W. F. Wellman. 30
Quite a pretty song on a homely subject. Good chorus.
Sylvia Lee. 2. A to f sharp. H. F. King. 30
Pleasing ballad in popular style.
Fairy Bells. 2. Bb. W. C. Levey. 30
Here the mysterious Bells echo with witching effect through the forest.
Winking at me, or, How can I sing? 2. D to e. Alice Siedler. 30
Effective comic song.
Peter the Hermit. 4. A and D to e. Gounod. 50
A splendid effective dramatic song of easy compass. As it is in a sort of declamatory style, it could hardly fail to win applause, when sung with energy.
Walking in the Rain. Comic. 2. Bb to e flat. Bobby Newcomb. 40
Belle of Central Park. Comic. 2. Eb to e flat. Bobby Newcomb. 40
Two songs destined to be popular in "Minstrel" audiences, and that includes almost everybody. Melodies quite pleasing.
Soft falls the Dew of the Summer Night. Duet. 4. D to G sharp. Glover. 50
That a duet should be Glover's, is enough to recommend it; and this brings its own commendation.

Instrumental.

- Immortellen Waltz. Gung'l. 2. F. Simplified by Knight. 30
Dream of the Ball. Waltz. Godfrey. 2. C. Simplified by Knight. 30
Belong to a set, "Easy arrangement of Dance Music," and are quite acceptable, as there are many players who find such pieces as the above, with their common arrangement, one degree too difficult.
Baton Galop. 2. G. W. A. Field. 30
Quite a sparkling and pretty little thing. Try it.
Schubert's Funeral March. 4. Gb. Trans. by Pauer. 40
Gloomy and grand throughout, and of fine workmanship.
Schubert's Triumphal March. 4. D. Trans. by Pauer. 40
Grand, but not like the other gloomy. Powerful and full of triumph.
Schubert's March of the Knights. 3. B minor. Trans. by Pauer. 40
Original and startling in its arrangement. The above three constitute a trio of Marches far above what ordinarily goes by that name, and are commended to energetic players.
Brilliant Jewels. A Piano-forte Medley. 3. A. P. Wyman. 75
A very pleasing combination of a number of popular melodies, in various keys.
St. James' Waltz. 3. Ab. J. A. Norris. 30
Named in honor of the great hotel. As it is quite original and brilliant, people of the hotel and neighborhood (at least) should possess and play it.
Champagne Charlie Quickstep. 2. C. Knight. 30
We can't say much for the habits of the original Charlie. But the melody he gave rise to is one of the greatest favorites. Get the music quick, while it is foaming!

ABBREVIATIONS.—Degrees of difficulty are marked from 1 to 7. The key is marked with a capital letter, as C, E flat, &c. A small Roman letter marks the highest note, if on the staff, an *italic* letter the highest note, if above the staff.

MUSIC BY MAIL.—Music is sent by mail, the expense being two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof, (about one cent for an ordinary piece of music). Persons at a distance will find the conveyance a saving of time and expense in obtaining supplies. Books can also be sent at double these rates.

